Excerpts from the Diaries of Howard Carter

*“For no man takes his riches to the grave.”*

*—Song from the Tomb of King Intef*

*Howard Carter searched for the tomb of an unknown Egyptian Pharaoh named Tutankhamun for about ten years. Then, on November 22, 1922, Carter found the tomb at last. It turned out to be one of the most important finds in archaeological history because of all the riches found inside. Carter’s discovery made the name “King Tut” known around the world.*

**November 4, 1922**

Something out of the ordinary happened. A step cut in the rock has been discovered.

**November 5, 1922**

Towards sunset we had cleared down to the level of the 12th step, which was sufficient to expose a large part of the upper portion of a plastered and sealed doorway. Here before us was sufficient evidence to show that it really was an entrance to a tomb, and by the seals, to all outward appearances that it was intact ... The seal-impressions suggested that it belonged to somebody of high standing, but at that time I had not found any indications as to whom.

**November 6, 1922**

At last I have made a wonderful discovery ... a magnificent tomb with seals intact.

**November 24, 1922**

The whole staircase is clear. We made out the name of Tutankhamun.

**November 25, 1922**

We opened the first doorway...and exposed the beginning of a completely blocked descending passage. It was filled with stone and rubble. As we cleared the passage, we found mixed with the rubble broken pots, jars, and numerous fragments of small objects; jars whole and broken, and colored pottery vases; all pertaining to some burial.

**November 26, 1922**

It was the day of days. The most wonderful I have ever lived through. We came upon a second sealed doorway. Feverishly we cleared away the remaining last scraps of rubbish on the floor of the passage, until we had only the clean sealed doorway before us. With trembling hands I made a tiny breach in the upper left hand corner to see what was beyond ... widening the hole a little I inserted the candle and peered in ... at first I could see nothing, the hot air escaping from the chamber causing the candle to flicker. Presently details of the room emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues and gold—everywhere the glint of gold. For a moment—an eternity it must have seemed to the others—I was struck dumb with amazement ... I could see wonderful things. It was a strange and wonderful medley of extraordinary and beautiful objects heaped upon one another.

I then with precaution made the hole sufficiently large for both of us to see. With the light of an electric torch as well as an additional candle we looked in. Our sensations and astonishment are difficult to describe as the better light revealed to us the marvelous collection of treasures ... gold couches ... exquisitely painted, inlaid and ornamental caskets, flowers, vases ... finely carved chairs, a golden inlaid throne ... and lastly a confusion of overturned parts of chariots glinting with gold .... The first impression of which suggested the property-room of an opera of a vanished civilization. Our sensations were bewildering and full of strange emotion. We questioned one another as to the meaning of it all. Was it a tomb or merely a cache? A sealed doorway between two statues proved there was more beyond, and with the numerous cartouches bearing the name of Tutankhamun on most of the objects before us, there was little doubt that behind there was the grave of that Pharaoh.

**November 27, 1922**

It soon became obvious that we were on the threshold of the discovery. The sight that met us was beyond anything one could conceive.

It was a sight surpassing all precedent, and one we never dreamed of seeing. We were astonished by the beauty and refinement of the art displayed by the objects surpassing all we could have imagined — the impression was overwhelming.



*Howard Carter had discovered the only complete final resting place of an Ancient Egyptian Pharaoh. There were four rooms in the tomb, and over two thousand objects, many covered in gold. In addition, he discovered King Tut’s golden coffin. The mummy of the king was still inside, more than three thousand years after his death. It was covered with jewels and a golden mask.*

*The riches found in the tomb were astounding. But even more astounding is the fact that Tutankhamun was considered an unimportant king. He reigned for only ten years and died when he was about eighteen. It makes one wonder what vast wealth and riches may have been buried with the greatest kings of Ancient Egypt.*

1. Which of the following statements best explains what the passage is mainly about?
2. Howard Carter accidently discovers the tomb of a young king while trying to locate the tomb an old king.
3. Howard Carter shares his many frustrations over the many years it took to find the tomb of an Egyptian Pharaoh.
4. Howard Carter describes the amazing treasures his team finds upon discovering the tomb of an Egyptian Pharaoh.
5. Howard Carter explains the small details explorers should look for when trying to make important discovery.
6. On the day Howard Carter opens the first doorway, the team
7. finds a clean staircase.
8. sees a mummy of a king.
9. uses a candle to see in a hole.
10. clears away a blocked passage.
11. When does the team FIRST realize that the tomb they had located belonged to somebody important?
12. The team discovered a step cut in a rock.
13. The team found seal impressions still intact.
14. The team saw golden couches and a golden throne.
15. The team read the name Tutankhamun on numerous objects.
16. What happened AFTER the team opens the second doorway, but BEFORE they discover the grave of the Pharaoh?
17. Howard Carter is amazed by the beauty of the objects.
18. Howard Carter uncovers a mummy with a golden mask.
19. The team clears away stone and rubble from a staircase.
20. The team exposes the upper portion of a sealed doorway.
21. Which detail from the passage indicates that it took Howard Carter a long time to find where King Tutankhamun was buried?
22. Howard spent about ten years searching for the tomb.
23. There were four rooms in the tomb and had over two thousand objects.
24. The Pharaoh was king for ten years and died when he was about eighteen.
25. Howard found the Pharaoh more than three thousand years after his death.
26. Which detail from the passage helps show there may be other tombs with even more riches than King Tutankhamun?
27. King Tutankhamun was discovered in a golden coffin.
28. King Tutankhamun was buried with finely carved chairs.
29. King Tutankhamun was suggested to be part of a vanished civilization.
30. King Tutankhamun was considered to be a young and unimportant king.
31. Read these sentences from the passage.

**Presently details of the room emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues and gold**—**everywhere the glint of gold.**

What does the word *emerged* mean as used in the sentences above?

1. appeared
2. collected
3. imagined
4. vanished

1. The author most likely wrote “Excerpts from the Diaries of Howard Carter” to
2. provide details on how an ancient Egyptian Pharaoh ruled his people.
3. share a personal description of a significant archaeological discovery.
4. suggest that the riches buried with Egyptian Pharaohs were excessive.
5. reveal that there are still many undiscovered tombs around the world.
6. Why did the author include the photo of King Tutankhamun’s mask?
7. to show why he died at such a young age
8. to suggest that he was an angry and serious ruler
9. to emphasize the riches that were included in his burial
10. to prove that his tomb is recognized all around the world
11. Howard Carter’s attitude towards his exploration of the tomb was
12. eager but cautious.
13. excited but careless.
14. impatient but forgetful.
15. nervous but thoughtful.

Answer Key:

1. Correct Answer C, DOK 2
2. Correct Answer D, DOK 1
3. Correct Answer B, DOK 1
4. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
5. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
6. Correct Answer D, DOK 2
7. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
8. Correct Answer B, DOK 2
9. Correct Answer C, DOK 3
10. Correct Answer A, DOK 3